

ON THE
OMNISCIENCE
OF THE
SUPREME BEING.
A
POETICAL ESSAY.

By CHRISTOPHER SMART, M.A.
Fellow of Pembroke-Hall in the University of Cambridge.

CAMBRIDGE,

Printed by J. BENTHAM Printer to the UNIVERSITY.

Sold by W. THURLBOURN in Cambridge, C. BATHURST in Fleet-street,
J. NEWBERY in St. Paul's Church-yard, R. DODSLEY at Tully's Head
in Pall-Mall, London; and J. HILDYARD at York.

M.DCC.LII.

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MDCCLII.

TO
THE MOST REVEREND HIS GRACE,
THE
LORD ARCH-BISHOP
OF
CANTERBURY;

THIS POETICAL ESSAY
ON

The Omniscience of the Supreme Being,

Is with all humility Inscribed,

By His GRACE'S

most dutiful

most obliged

and most obedient

humble Servant

C. SMART.

TO THE MOST REVEREND THE GRACE

LORD ARCHBISHOP

CANTERBURY;

THIS LITURGICAL ESSAY

ON

THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SEVEN DAYS

IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

BY THE GRACE

OF GOD

AND

OF HIS HOLY CHURCH

OF ENGLAND

C. E. M. A. T.

A Clause of Mr. Seaton's Will,

Dated Oct. 8. 1738.

I Give my Kislinbury Estate to the University of Cambridge for ever : the Rents of which shall be disposed of yearly by the Vice-Chancellor for the time being, as he the Vice-Chancellor, the Master of Clare Hall, and the Greek Professor for the time being, or any two of them shall agree. Which three persons aforesaid shall give out a Subject, which Subject shall for the first Year be one or other of the Perfections or Attributes of the Supreme Being, and so the succeeding Years, till the Subject is exhausted; and afterwards the Subject shall be either Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell, Purity of heart, &c. or whatever else may be judged by the Vice-Chancellor, Master of Clare Hall, and Greek Professor to be most conducive to the honour of the Supreme Being and recommendation of Virtue. And they shall yearly dispose of the Rent of the above Estate to that Master of Arts, whose Poem on the Subject given shall be best approved by them. Which Poem I ordain to be always in English, and to be printed; the expence of which shall be deducted out of the product of the Estate, and the residue given as a reward for the Composer of the Poem, or Ode, or Copy of Verses.

WE the underwritten, do assign Mr. SEATON's Reward to C. SMART M. A. for his Poem on *The Omniscience of the Supreme Being*, and direct the said Poem to be printed, according to the tenor of the Will.

November 2. 1752.

J. Wilcox Vice-Chancellor.
T. Francklin Greek Professor.

A Clause of Mr. Scoton's Will

Dated Oct. 8. 1758.

Give my Right Honourable Estate to the University of Cambridge
for ever: the Rent of which shall be disposed of yearly by
the Vice-Chancellor for the time being at his discretion
the Master of Clare Hall, and the Greek Professor for the time
being, or any two of them shall agree. Which three persons
aforesaid shall give out a Subject, which Subject shall for the
first Year be one or other of the Perfections or Imperfections of the
Sapient Being, and for the second Year, all the Subject is
examined; and after that the third Year shall be reserved
Judgment, Honour, Holiness, Purity of heart, Reasonableness
etc. may be judged by the Vice-Chancellor, Master of Clare Hall,
and Greek Professor to be most conducive to the honour of God
Sapient Being and recommendation of Virtue. And they shall
give a list of the Rent of the above Estate to that effect of
this, which is to be the Subject given shall be used in English, and to
be used in Latin, and I order to be a copy in English, and to
be printed; the expense of which shall be the charge of the
Trustees of the Estate, and the expense of a reward for
the Compiler of the Poem, or Ode, or Copy, &c. &c.

Witness my hand and seal, this 8th day of October 1758.
Wm. Scoton
Vice-Chancellor
of the University of Cambridge

ON THE
OMNISCIENCE
OF THE
SUPREME BEING.

ARISE divine Urania with new strains
To hymn thy God, and thou, immortal Fame,
Arise, and blow thy everlasting trump.
All glory to th' Omniscient, and praise,
And pow'r, and domination in the height!
And thou, cherubic Gratitude, whose voice
To pious ears sounds filverly so sweet,
Come with thy precious incense, bring thy gifts,

And

And with thy choicest stores the altar crown.
 Thou too, my heart, ^{with} whom ^{he} and he alone
 Who all things knows, can know, with love replete,
 Regenerate, and pure, pour all thyself
 A living sacrifice before his throne :
 And may th'eternal, ^{the} high mysterious tree,
 That in the center of the arched Heav'ns
 Bears the rich fruit of Knowledge, with some branch
 Stoop to my humble reach, and bless my toil!

When in my mother's womb conceal'd I lay
 A senseless embryo, then my soul thou knewst,
 Knewst all her future workings, every thought,
 And every faint idea yet unform'd.
 When up the imperceptible ascent
 Of growing years, led by thy hand, I rose,
 Perception's gradual light, that ever dawns,
 Insensibly to day, thou didst vouchsafe,
 And taught me by that reason thou inspir'd'st,
 That what of knowledge in my mind was low,
 Imperfect,

But is his own physician, knows the case,
 And from th' emetic herbage works his cure.
 Hark from afar the * feather'd matron screams,
 And all her brood alarms, the docile crew
 Accept the signal one and all, expert
 In th' art of nature and unlearn'd deceit :
 Along the sod, in counterfeited death,
 Mute, motionless they lie; full well appriz'd,
 That the rapacious adversary's near.
 But who inform'd her of th' approaching danger,
 Who taught the cautious mother, that the hawk
 Was hatcht her foe, and liv'd by her destruction?
 Her own prophetic soul is active in her,
 And more than human providence her guard.

When Philomela, e'er the cold domain
 Of cripled winter gins t' advance, prepares
 Her annual flight, and in some poplar shade
 Takes her melodious leave, who then's her pilot?

* The Hen Turkey.

Who points her passage thro' the pathless void
 To realms from us remote, to us unknown?
 Her science is the science of her God.
 Not the magnetic index to the North
 E'er ascertains her course, nor buoy, nor beacon.
 She heav'n-taught voyager, that sails in air,
 Courts nor coy West nor East, but instant knows
 What * Newton, or not sought, or sought in vain.
 Illustrious name, irrefragable proof
 Of man's vast genius, and the soaring soul!
 Yet what wert thou to him, who knew his works,
 Before creation form'd them, long before
 He measur'd in the hollow of his hand
 Th'exulting ocean, and the highest Heav'n's
 He comprehended with a span, and weigh'd
 The mighty mountains in his golden Scales
 Who shone supreme, who was himself the light,
 E'er yet Refraction learn'd her skill to paint,

And bend athwart the clouds her beauteous bow.

When Knowledge at her father's dread command
Resign'd to Israel's king her golden key,

Oh to have join'd the frequent auditors

In wonder and delight, that whilom heard

Great Solomon descanting on the brutes.

Oh how sublimely glorious to apply

To God's own honour, and good will to man,

That wisdom he alone of men possess'd

In plenitude so rich, and scope so rare.

How did he rouse the pamper'd silken sons

Of bloated ease, by placing to their view

The sage industrious ant, the wisest insect,

And best oeconomist of all the field!

Tho' she presumes not by the solar orb

To measure times and seasons, nor consults

Chaldean calculations, for a guide ;

Yet conscious that December's on the march

Pointing with icie hand to want and woe,

She waits his dire approach, and undismay'd
 Receives him as a welcome guest, prepar'd
 Against the churlish winter's fiercest blow.
 For when, as yet the favourable Sun
 Gives to the genial earth th'enlivening ray,
 Not the poor suffering slave, that hourly toils
 To rive the groaning earth for ill-sought gold,
 Endures such trouble, such fatigue, as she;
 While all her subterraneous avenues,
 And storm-proof cells with management most meet
 And unexampled housewifry the forms:
 Then to the field she hies, and on her back
 Burden immense! she bears the cumbrous corn.
 Then many a weary step, and many a strain,
 And many a grievous groan subdued, at length
 Up the huge hill she hardly heaves it home:
 Nor rests she here her providence, but nips
 With subtle tooth the grain, left from her garner
 In mischievous fertility it steal,

And

And back to day-light vegetate its way.
 Go to the Ant, thou sluggard, learn to live,
 And by her wary ways reform thine own.
 But, if thy deaden'd sense, and listless thought
 More glaring evidence demand; behold,
 Where yon pellucid populous hive presents
 A yet uncopied model to the world!
 There Machiavel in the reflecting glass
 May read himself a fool. The Chemist there
 May with astonishment invidious view
 His toils outdone by each plebeian Bee,
 Who, at the royal mandate, on the wing
 From various herbs, and from discordant flow'rs
 A perfect harmony of sweets compounds.

Avaunt Conceit, Ambition take thy flight
 Back to the Prince of vanity and air!

'Tis a thought of energy most piercing;
 Now humble; form'd to force
 Mind, and give her

A true but irksome image of herself.
 Woful vicissitude! when Man, fall'n Man,
 Who first from Heav'n from gracious God himself
 Learn'd knowledge of the Brutes, must know by Brutes
 Instructed and reproach'd, the scale of being;
 By slow degrees from lowly steps ascend,
 And trace Omniscience upwards to its spring!
 Yet murmur not, but praise—for tho' we stand
 Of many a Godlike privilege amerc'd
 By Adam's dire transgression, tho' no more
 Is Paradise our home, but o'er the portal
 Hangs in terrific pomp the burning blade;
 Still with ten thousand beauties blooms the Earth
 With pleasures populous, and with riches crown'd.
 Still is there scope for wonder and for love
 Ev'n to their last exertion—show'rs of blessings
 Far more than human virtue can deserve,
 Or hope expect, or gratitude return
 Then O ye People, O ye Sons

Whatever be the colour of your lives,
 Whatever portion of itself his Wisdom
 Shall deign t'allow, still patiently abide
 And praise him more and more; nor cease to chant
 ALL GLORY TO TH'OMNISCIENT AND PRAISE,
 AND POW'R AND DOMINATION IN THE HEIGHT!
And thou cherubic Gratitude, whose voice
To pious ears sounds silverly so sweet,
Come with thy precious incense, bring thy gifts,
And with thy choicest stores the altar crown.

ΤΩ ΘΕΩ ΔΟΞΑ.

12
Whatever be the colour of your liver,
Whatever portion of itself his Willdom
Shall design to show, still patiently abide
And praise him more and more; nor cease to chant
All Glories to the Praise,
Lately Publish'd,

1. Poems on Several Occasions.
2. On the Eternity of the SUPREME BEING;
a Poetical Essay. Edit. 2.
3. On the Immensity of the SUPREME BEING;
a Poetical Essay.

By Mr. SMART.